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STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

STRATEGIC RECRUITING: HOW TO MAN THE FORCE OF THE FUTURE

BY

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27 Apr 00

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STRATEGIC RECRUITING: HOW TO MAN THE FORCE OF THE FUTURE

Chapter 1

Introduction

The Problem

There have been few military topics researched, studied and discussed more than recruiting for the armed forces. Current efforts confirm two seemingly contradictory factors. The first is that confidence and trust in the U.S. military by the American public - to include our youth - is extremely high and has continued to grow through the 1990s. Second, the ability of military recruiters to fill the ranks of the All-Volunteer Force (AVF) has continued to decline each year since 1993. The current enlistment shortfall is so great that it threatens our national security.

Connecting the disconnect between the positive image the American people have about the U.S. military and their willingness to enlist in the armed forces of our country is the intent of this paper. Our efforts need to focus on expanding the target audience to include college-age men and women while identifying better ways to reach and attract this population. Historically, the military has addressed recruiting challenges by spending more money and increasing the number of recruiters. While such "fixes" address short-term problems, they fail to provide an approach to recruiting in a changing demographic and college-focused marketplace. A significant departure from historical practices is now needed to man the force of the future.

The Objective

The objective of this paper is to identify and develop both short and long-term recommendations that will enhance the effectiveness and productivity of current recruiting efforts. Four recommendations to achieve this objective are included in this study.

Assumptions

This study is based upon the following assumptions and boundaries:

- 1. The information we present is not service specific and can be applied to the recruiting efforts of any of our armed forces, active or reserve component.
- 2. There is not a widening gap between civilian and military cultures. While there are differences between these cultures, these differences do not represent a major division or obstacle to successful recruiting. What does exist is a general "vacuum" of societal awareness of the missions and functions of the post-cold war military.
- Strengthening the civil-military connection will result in improving the U.S. military's
 ability to accomplish its recruiting mission. It will also make service accessions more
 independent of economic or employment factors.
- 4. The recommendations in this study are not meant to represent the only methods for improving recruiting in the U.S. military, but they do offer a strong framework around which recruiting activities and theories should be centered.
- 5. This paper focuses primarily on enlisted recruiting and does not address retention issues. This is not meant to ignore the impact of retention upon recruiting, but consideration of those issues are outside the scope of our work.

Methodology

The study began with a review of the literature on military recruiting as it relates to all of the military services, active and reserve. A number of library catalog systems were utilized to gather data including HOLLIS and HOLLIS Plus, Harvard University's online library catalog, and the U.S. Army War College library online system.

Interviews were conducted with John McLaurin, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army (Military Personnel Management and Equal Opportunity Policy); Lieutenant General (retired) Theodore Stroup, former Army Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel (DCSPER), Major General Timothy Maude, Army Assistant DCSPER, Steven Sellman, DOD Director of Accessions, Rear Admiral Barbara McGann, Commander, Navy Recruiting Command, Murray Rowe, Director, Navy Personnel and Research Studies and Technology, and Captain Montgomery Willis, Commanding Officer, Navy Recruiting Orientation Unit. Others providing perspective included Secretary of the Army Louis Caldera and Undersecretary of the Navy Jerry Hultin.

Data gathering continued and was refined through contacts with organizations involved in U.S. military recruiting research. Organizations providing information for the study through interviews, presentations and/or sharing of pertinent research information include the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), the RAND Corporation, Military Operational Research Society (MORS), Commander, Naval Recruiting Command (CNRC), Navy Personnel Research, Studies and Technology (NPRST), DoD Recruiting, Program Analysis and Evaluation - United States Army

Recruiting Command (USARC), Navy Recruiting Orientation Unit (NORU), and United States Army War College (USAWC).

Research findings were analyzed to determine a priority list of strategies that, if implemented, would have a significant positive impact on U.S. military recruiting performance. The application of Peter Senge's principle of leverage³, which states that often the best results for change don't come from large scale actions, but from small, well focused actions, was used to develop recommendations focused on building a stronger civil-military connection.

This research effort was supported by faculty members at Harvard University and the mentorship program at USAWC. A research study group of National Security Fellows from Harvard University and Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) representing all services provided insight into the design and content of this study as well.

Organization of the Study

The chapters are organized as follows:

Chapter 1 - Introduction

Chapter 2 - The Disconnect

Sets the stage for the recruiting recommendations in this study. A detailed background of the "disconnect" between the positive perceptions of the American public about the U.S. military and the challenges the armed forces are facing in filling their ranks with recruits is presented.

Chapter 3 - Fixing the Target

Presents the highest priority recommendation in this study, expanding the primary recruiting market and shifting the focus of the target audience.

Chapter 4 - Attacking the Problem

This chapter describes recommendations to encourage the target audience to enlist in the military and to change how the U.S. military presents information to the public.

Also described are improvements in initiatives and incentives, recruiter selection and optimization, maximized use of the internet for recruiting purposes, and outsourcing specified recruiter activities.

Chapter 5 - JROTC: An Indirect Military Recruiting Connection

This chapter reviews the need to recognize JROTC as a successful national level youth development program. The need to expand JROTC to keep pace with community

demands is reinforced. Data linking JROTC participation with the propensity for youth to enlist in military service is presented.

Chapter 6 - Conclusions

Offers an implementation timeline for study recommendations and notes areas for further study.

The Disconnect

A thorough understanding of the topic of U.S. military recruiting requires first looking at the perceptions of the population that the military is seeking to recruit. The following review of research on the American public's perceptions of the U.S. military contrasted with the downward trend of military recruiting efforts highlights the need to refine and strengthen the civil-military connection, which is the intent of this study.

Public Perceptions of the U.S. Military

According to Harris polls, public opinion of the U.S. military has been on a continual climb upward since the Vietnam era. The performance of our armed forces drew positive recognition by the American people during the Reagan and Bush presidencies. The success of military missions such as Operation Urgent Fury in Grenada (1983) and Operation Just Cause in Panama (1989) has resulted in a growing trust that the U.S. military is made up of professional people who can "get the job done." The Gulf War proved to be a time to highlight public support for service members, and the veterans returning home from Desert Storm in 1991 were greeted by an enthusiastic and supporting American public. Public opinion of the U.S. military after the Gulf War was extremely high, and the 1995 Gallup Poll showed that close to 85 percent of the people surveyed expressed a great deal of confidence in the leadership of the military as well. The comparison in Table 1 of the Harris 1971 and 1998 rankings of public confidence levels in institutions reinforces the renewed and positive public opinion about the U.S.

military. Respect and confidence in our armed forces has been further embedded into the American culture through positive portrayals of the U.S. military in such films as *Top*Gun and Saving Private Ryan and television shows such as J.A.G.

Table 1: Ranking of Institutions Inspiring a "Great Deal of Confidence." 5

Harris, 1971	1971 %	Harris, 1998	1998 %	Change 1971-1998
Medicine	61	Military	43	+16
Universities	46	Supreme Court	40	+17
Organized Religion	27	Medicine	36	-25
Major Companies	27	Universities	35	-11
Military	27	Organized Religion	24	-3
Supreme Court	23	Television News	22	0
Executive Branch	23	Major Companies	21	-6
Television News	22	Wall Street	19	0
Law Firms	20	The White House	18	0
Wall Street	19	Executive Branch	16	-7
Congress	19	Press	14	-4
The White House	18	Organized Labor	11	-3
The Press	18	Congress 11		-8
Organized Labor	14	Law Firms	10	-10

This positive feeling about our services is especially evident in America's young people, as the University of Chicago's General Social Survey suggests. The results of the survey given to 19 and 20 year olds in 1998 showed 52 percent of the respondents to have a great deal of confidence in the military. Harvard University's King and Karabell explain our young generation's high level of trust in the U.S. military by suggesting that a person's perceptions about the military depends significantly on what he or she read, saw

and experienced as a young adult.⁷ The youth of America today has been able to observe the U.S. military in a much more positive light than previous generations.

It would seem that the trust and confidence the American public has in today's U.S. military would ensure the success of the All-Volunteer Force. The connection, however, between the public's perceptions of our armed forces and actually enlisting in our armed forces, isn't strong enough to fill our ranks, as the following section on military recruiting illustrates.

Military Recruiting Status

Currently, the U.S. military faces significant challenges in recruiting and retaining a quality volunteer force. The Department of Defense recently announced the final recruiting and retention results for the fiscal year that ended on September 30, 1999. The Air Force ended the fiscal year with a manpower shortage of about 10,000 - a combination of too few recruits and too many people leaving the service. The Army, Navy, and Marine Corps reached troop strength levels set by Congress, although only the Marines - the smallest of the major services with 172,500 people - met their goals in both recruiting and retention. The Air Force, which for years did not have major recruiting challenges, fell short in both recruiting and retention, whereas the Army overcame a recruiting shortfall of 3,700 only by exceeding its retention goal. The Navy, which was nearly 7,000 recruits short in 1998, relaxed some of its quality discriminators and met its goal. The first quarter of FY00 shows that each of the services has met their quarterly attainment goal with the exception of the Air Force, which is battling a 1000 person

shortfall. Despite these early returns, all services, including the Coast Guard, anticipate significant challenges in meeting their end of year goals.

These statistics demonstrate an obvious disconnect between the public's favorable perceptions about the military and young people's willingness to enlist. Chapter 3 continues our study with an examination of the appropriate or target recruiting population.

Chapter 3

Fixing the Target

Current Situation: The primary military recruiting market since the advent of the all volunteer force in the mid-1970s has been the 17 to 21 year old population, with specific focus on graduating high school seniors in this cohort. This primary market is projected to grow from 1.4 million in 1999 to 1.69 million in 2010, a growth of just 2.93 percent. The projected military accession mission during the same period is expected to grow between seven to 17 percent, depending on branch of service and assumptions of future military recruiting success or failure. Each of the armed services has failed to achieve its accession mission to varying degrees since 1995.

Recommendations:

Expand the primary recruiting market from 17 to 21 year olds to 17 to 25 year olds. Shift the specific military recruiting focus from graduating high school seniors to 18-25 year olds with some college education. Allow certified, home-schooled high school graduates who score high on the Armed Forces Qualification Test (AFQT) to be assessed as "high-quality" recruits.

Discussion: The past five years have been challenging for the armed forces, which have struggled to achieve their military accession mission. At the completion of fiscal year 1999, only the Marine Corps enlisted both the number and quality of recruits it had sought. The Army did not achieve its numbers for the second consecutive year, overcoming a recruiting shortfall of 6,300 for the active component only by exceeding its

retention goal. Not as easy to overcome was a shortfall in the Army Reserve of 10,500. The Navy, which was nearly 7,000 recruits short in 1998, avoided a similar fate in 1999 only by lowering its enlistment standards. The Air Force did not meet its recruiting accession mission of 33,800; falling short by 1,732 airmen for the first time since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989.

Not since the late 1970s has the military had such difficulty meeting the requirements for the all volunteer military. Several factors contributed to the late 1970s dilemma – military pay raises lagged behind private-sector increases, educational benefits for members of the armed forces were reduced while student aid for civilians was increased and recruiting budgets did not keep pace with inflation. Consider a tarnished public image of the military from the Vietnam experience, the Mayaguez incident and the Iranian hostage crisis, and a broader understanding of the challenge is gained.¹⁰

The dramatic and successful turnaround of military recruiting in the 1980s is most often attributed to significant military pay raises implemented by the Reagan administration in 1980 and 1981. Other commonly accepted factors include increasing unemployment as the recession deepened, increased educational benefits for military recruits while student aid programs for civilians were cut, allocating more resources to military recruiting efforts and greater support from the executive and legislative branches of government for the country's military institutions.¹¹

It is interesting to contrast the problems of the 1970s with today. In 2000, pay again is an issue, with a perceived significant wage gap between comparable jobs in the civil and military sectors. Incremental enhancements to military educational benefits lag behind both the actual cost of higher education and comparable financial aid available in

the civilian sector. For example, in the civilian sector there are currently 180,000 different scholarships available to graduating high school seniors in the United States.

One in five private colleges now offers tuition discounts of 30 percent or more. All but three states now offer some sort of college assistance program including scholarships and pre-paid tuition, and the federal government provides a range of college financing options from Pell Grants to Education Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs) and tax credits aimed at assisting lower-income students. There is an increasing trend among businesses competing for a tight, skilled labor market to partner with high schools, colleges and universities to offer simultaneous enrollment/employment options to youth. All of these measures, while affording more graduating high school seniors an opportunity to attend college, diminish the incentives of military service, particularly the attraction of military college savings plans.

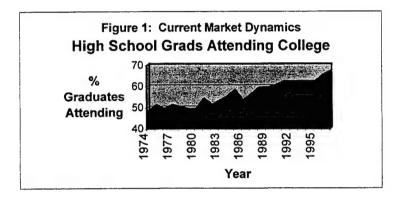
Even so, recruiting budgets, bonuses and incentives for all branches of military service are at all-time highs. The Department of Defense spends two billion dollars a year to recruit 200,000 soldiers, sailors, marines and airmen. Contrast this with 10 years ago when the military spent 11 percent less, adjusted for inflation, to sign up 40 percent more enlistees. According to former Army DCSPER, Lieutenant General (retired)

Theodore Stroup, senior defense leaders anticipated recruiting difficulty in the mid to late 1990s as the military pulled out of its drawdown and began to dramatically increase accessions to meet steady-state endstrengths. Leaders realized that military advertising budgets and the recruiter work force would require augmentation to meet this increased recruiting demand. What military leaders did not anticipate, however, was a booming economy with unemployment at historically low levels. Factor in increased military

commitments to crises around the globe, and the challenge of successfully manning the armed forces in the future becomes a strategic imperative. Although the recruiting budget for the services has been tripled over the past two years, recruiting results in terms of meeting enlistment accession targets has not enjoyed a corresponding increase.¹⁷ What is needed is a coherent strategy to focus the funds being poured into this effort, beginning with an expansion of the target audience.

The primary military recruiting focus since the advent of the all-volunteer force in the mid-1970s has been graduating high school seniors. This approach worked fairly well for 20 years. This target audience provided the largest pool of young people who were qualified and demonstrated a willingness or propensity to enlist in the armed forces. However, several indicators demonstrate that military recruiting from this pool is failing and that a "train wreck" in terms of recruiting sufficient numbers of personnel for the armed forces is on the horizon. Studies by both the Department of Defense and the Army's Recruiting Command demonstrate unequivocally that the military accession mission is growing faster than the target population. Compounding this statistic is the fact that during the last 10 years, the percentage of this pool that has elected to go on to two and four-year colleges has jumped from less than half (around 45 percent) in 1977 to two thirds (67 percent) in 1997. 18 A recent study by the Education Trust, a non-profit organization focusing on minority and lower-income students shows that the number of graduating high school seniors going on to college is now 72 percent. The military's target audience will shrink further if projections that college attendance will rise to 80 percent by 2005 are correct.19

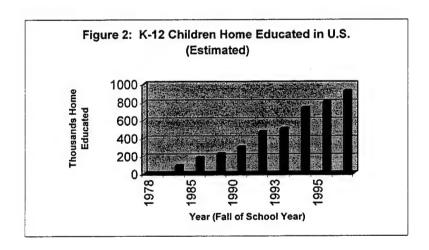
The fact that only a minority of high school seniors do not go on to college, coupled with low unemployment and a booming U.S. economy, make a convincing argument that graduating high school seniors may no longer be the most promising audience for military recruiting. Current market dynamics lead to the conclusion that the military recruiting focus should shift, or the target audience should expand, to the homeschooled high school graduates and "drop-outs" or "stop-outs" from two and four year colleges that have dramatically increased in the last 10 years.



Of the two thirds of graduating high school seniors that go on to college today, up to one-half do not complete their prescribed course of study.²⁰ Among the most cited reasons for not completing their course of study is accumulated debt from college costs that have quadrupled in the last 20 years.²¹ A study of 154 different colleges and universities in the United States found that nearly 60 percent of 1998's graduating seniors had outstanding debt accumulated over their college tenure in the form of student loans from colleges, financial institutions, federal, state and local governments. The average amount of debt for each of these college seniors was in excess of \$14,000.²² The overwhelming percentage of students in debt and their degree of debt is significant and may be a source for specifically targeted incentives designed to encourage this population

to enlist in the armed forces. Although not totally ignored by military recruiting efforts, this growing population of young people with some college education is not being aggressively pursued for enlistment in the armed services despite their education, experience and intellectual capacity. In fiscal year 1996 for example, only three percent of service enlistees (without prior military service) entered the military with some college education.²³

Home-schoolers are also a virtually untapped recruiting resource for the armed services. The number of home-schooled students in the United States is growing at the impressive rate of 15% to 40% per year. There are 700,000 to 1,150,000 children (kindergarten through 12th grade) who were home educated during 1996-1997.²⁴



Until recently the services did not recognize home-schoolers as high school graduates. Rationale for the service's hesitancy to accept home schooled high school graduates appears two-fold. First, the services have difficulty determining the legitimacy of a home-schoolers' high school diploma. There is no nationally recognized standard or certification for home-schooled high school graduates. Individual standards and

certification vary greatly from state to state. Second, historical data indicates an attrition rate during basic training for home-schoolers greater than that experienced by traditional high school graduates.²⁵ As a result, until fairly recently, home schooled recruits were not eligible for many enlistment bonuses and college tuition aid because they were classified as holding a general equivalency diploma (GED) rather than being designated as a high school graduate. This classification often resulted in the loss of literally tens of thousands of dollars in cash and benefits to the home-schooled enlistee.

However, since the number of home-schoolers has increased to 1.7 million and their test scores on the American College Testing (ACT) exam are well above their high school peers²⁶, the time for incentives at least equal to their traditional high school graduate peers appears to be warranted. A recent five-year test program initiated by the Department of Defense that placed home-schooled recruits on a par with high school graduates yielded promising results. Before the test program, the Army enlisted only 31 home-schoolers in 1997 and 1998. The Air Force enlisted 10 in 1998, the Navy enlisted 23. After implementing the test program, the services home-schooled recruits jumped to 154 in the Army, 200 in the Air Force and 1,050 in the Navy. Given the recruiting difficulties and shortfalls identified during fiscal year 1999, offering certified homeschoolers incentives at least equal to their high school graduate peers appears to be a winwin proposition. The military expands their target audience at current costs for existing incentives and home-schooled high school graduates have a more appealing opportunity to serve their country. The Navy's Center for Naval Analyses has begun a two-year study of the home-schooled cohort to determine if there are differences in attrition rates and overall performance.

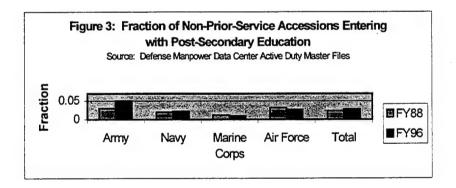
The Department of Defense should move boldly to more actively recruit the growing home-schooled population. Current incentives for high school graduates are sufficient, but the services' advertising campaign should be broadened to target this specific and growing segment of our society. Service reservations to initiating this bolder approach appear to be based on perceived differences in attrition rates and overall performance when compared to traditional high school graduates. However, the research and statistics to support these claims is marginal at best. Captain Jeff Sammons, a spokesman for Marine Recruiting Command, said "We have found historically that a high school graduate who goes through a normal institutional education has a better statistical rate of completing training. We're going to do a study following home-schoolers and see how well they stack up against the normally accredited high school graduates." The Air Force reported that in the first year of the expanded home-school enlistment program, home-schoolers' attrition rates were four percent higher than the overall attrition rate of nine percent.

Given the services' current recruiting woes, marginal data to support the claims of home-schoolers inferiority as recruits, and the increasingly powerful lobbying voice of home-schooler advocates in Congress²⁸, a bolder approach to appeal to this segment of potential recruits appears warranted

Attacking the Problem

Initiatives and Incentives

Current Situation: Seventy-two percent of graduating high school seniors are electing to attend two- and four-year colleges. Nearly fifty percent of this cohort fails to complete their college education. In fiscal year 1996, only three percent of service enlistees (non-prior service, all services) entered the military with some college education.²⁹



Recommendations:

Expand the Department of Defense loan repayment program with new Congressional legislation that broadens the bill beyond current restrictions requiring Department of Education guarantees and that loans are in good status. Specifically, allow repayment of all loans that can be documented as being used for the pursuit of post-secondary education and permit repayment of loans that are in default or in arrears.

Allow the Montgomery GI Bill and Service College Funds to be transferred to qualified spouse and immediate families of eligible servicemen.

Discussion: Many of the services have recently announced initiatives to attract former college students. For example, the Army offers bonuses up to \$20,000 and may assign higher rank and salary to former college students depending on the number of credit hours earned in an accredited college program. In addition, both the Army and the Navy offer a college loan repayment program. To qualify, the loan must be a federal loan guaranteed by the Department of Education under the Higher Education Act of 1965.

The Air Force is looking at initiating a similar program, requesting \$5 million for a pilot college loan repayment program in their 2001 budget proposal. 30

The Army plan is the most generous. For qualified candidates, the Army's College Loan Repayment Program will repay at the rate of one third of the loan for each year of active duty served up to a maximum of \$65,000 (\$20,000 for reserve) depending on skill training. The Navy's program offers \$10,000 for a four-year enlistment. However, qualification for the loan repayment program is difficult. Not only do prospective enlistees have to meet strict requirements on how their loan is financed (guaranteed by the Department of Education), but the loan must be in good standing and cannot be in arrears.

Thus, it would be safe to project that this incentive is neither very attractive to debt-ridden former college students, nor widely used by those that have chosen to enlist. Statistics bear out the accuracy of this projection. The current incentive programs are neither widely used, nor do they go far enough to attract or satisfy former college students. In fiscal year 1996 for example, only 4.8 percent of high quality Army accessions took advantage of the loan repayment option. In fiscal year 1988, this figure

was less than one percent. Although the number of participants in the program has grown somewhat (from one to 4.8 percent), it is still only a marginal fraction of the total number of enlistments.³¹ These statistics would seem to offer irrefutable evidence that a potentially lucrative recruiting market of former college students is not being aggressively pursued by military recruiters.

The services are exploring new methods and target audiences for recruiting.

Current examples include the Army's College First Program and GED Plus. These programs target college bound and minority populations. The college first program sponsors up to two years of post-secondary education for qualified college-bound graduating high school seniors. The GED plus program targets minority non-high school graduates to get their general education degree (GED) prior to enlistment. Both programs are examples of new methods to expand the target audience and attract potential recruits for enlistment.

Although we applaud and commend these efforts and their intended targets, more can be done to enlist the lucrative market of college drop-outs and stop-outs addressed in this paper. More appropriate incentives for college drop-outs and stop-outs include revamping the loan repayment program and offering the option to transfer the Montgomery GI Bill and Army College Fund to spouses and family members.

The Army's program of repaying approved college loans up to \$65,000 should be expanded and included across the military to include all services. The definition of approved college loans should be expanded beyond strictly government-financed programs, specifically Department of Education loans, to include all bonafide and documented tuition and academic materials expenses. The program should also apply to

loans that are delinquent or in default, not just loans in good standing. At a minimum, the loan repayment program should match that of other forms of national service. The AmeriCorps program for example, offers "forbearance on student loans" and payment for interest that is accrued on qualified student loans in addition to an education award for members who complete their service. Mr. John McLaurin, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army (Military Personnel Management and Equal Opportunity Policy) expressed the service's reservations for liberalizing the rules for the loan repayment program. Although not opposed in principle, the military is cautious about signing up for the additional costs associated with liberalizing the current legislation without increased and separate funding by Congress.

Another attraction for all enlistees, but particularly those with a college education, is procuring educational opportunities for their spouses and family members. Such a measure has been and continues to be sponsored by Senator Max Cleland, (D-GA), who is sponsoring a plan that would increase GI Bill education benefits and allow those benefits to be transferred to a servicemember's immediate family. Senator Cleland believes so strongly in the plan that he has pledged to "spend the next several months educating the House members and their committees about the necessity of those educational enhancements as part of our ongoing efforts to recruit and retain for our Armed Forces the best and brightest candidates the nation has to offer. 33 By allowing servicemembers to transfer their Montgomery GI Bill and Army College Fund to their spouses and family members, the government would be making a tangible and meaningful investment in military families while increasing the likelihood of obtaining the quality, knowledgeable force required to man an ever increasingly complex military.

Once again, however, the military is cautious about embracing a program that could incur significant additional costs without the proviso of additional and separate funding by Congress. If the old adage "the military enlists soldiers (sailors and marines), but reenlists families" is true, transfer of college benefits may be a significant and effective tool to improve the current recruiting and retention malaise.

Raising Public Awareness

Current Situation: With the end of the cold war and the nation entering another prolonged period without a major conflict, public awareness of military roles and missions has eroded. While some academics point to this as a "gap" between the military and civilian sector, it is more accurately described as a "vacuum" of public knowledge on the current utilization of our people and forces.³⁴ We have already noted that, while public confidence in the military is at an all-time high, the expected "bounce" in enlistments has not occurred. This is due to a blurring of the picture of what military units do when deployed away from home. During a recent lecture at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs acknowledged the problem and commented that "any and all suggestions would be welcome" to address the challenge of bringing the activities of today's military into a more public focus.³⁵ Such an effort would provide a "foundation" of military awareness on which the recruiter could build packages better suited to any potential enlistee.

Recommendation:

A focused effort is needed at the DOD level and by each of the services, to "tell the story" of life in the armed services of the new millennium.

Such an effort would convey what our forces and personnel do now and in the future.

Explaining the team aspects and personal growth opportunities and technical training opportunities in the military is imperative to filling the "vacuum" of public perception.

Such a campaign should include specific DOD branding efforts through television and film media coordinated with service initiatives. More emphasis is needed to unify public affairs and recruiting commands.

Discussion: Beginning in Vietnam and underscored during Operation Desert Storm, military activities were brought into America's living rooms daily. While the failures and frustrations of the Vietnam conflict served to lessen the nation's appetite for military service, the successes of Desert Storm obviously raised public awareness of the activities of the armed forces. The shaky beginning of the all-volunteer force (AVF) in the early 70s as well as the post-Desert Storm surge in recruiting both suggest that media coverage of military activities influence recruiting efforts significantly. The question then becomes, in a period when armed forces are used for varied missions such as peacekeeping and forward presence, what then "tells the story" of our forces at home and abroad? Certainly not the nightly news. As Frank Sesno, director of CNN, explained, "The Cold War is over – military coverage is just not one of the big drivers anymore." 36

A recent study of recruiting advertising underscored the problem of the post coldwar "image" of the military. The Bozell/Eskew "Recruitment Advertising Review" noted that "[The] Armed Forces must define a post Cold War mission. [An] unclear focus undermines 'branding' for service branches and creates uncertainty with general public and potential recruits." The study noted that, for the most part Joint Recruiting and Advertising Program (JRAP), a DOD program, goes "largely unfunded, and produces no real branding of [the] military."³⁷

The services need to find a way to regain a portion of the nation's attention.

Columnist Andrew Basevich recently noted that the services faced "ambivalence about the military's post Cold War role combined with waning appreciation for the obligations entailed by citizenship." Recent base closures and realignment, while providing needed economy and streamlining of support facilities, have had the additional effect of taking military members out of even more communities. Areas such as the Northeastern United States have no major military bases.

Against this backdrop, several academics have used this vacuum to further their arguments of a "gap" between society and the military. They define the gap as a significant divergence between the cultures of military and civilian members of society, and even suggest this divergence could threaten civilian control of the military.³⁹ But their gap theories do not hold up to close scrutiny and have been challenged in several forums.⁴⁰ A recent study on military culture from the Center for Strategic and International studies found no evidence of military alienation from civilian society.⁴¹ Our perception is that, rather than a gap, there exists a knowledge "void" - a general lack of information on the current missions and functions of the U.S. military. Steve Sellman, Director of Accession Policy at DOD recently noted "I am personally worried that

somehow or another young people and their influencers have...lost track of the role of the military."⁴²

Certainly the media plays a major role in the perceptions of the military for the target audience of military recruiters. In the 1950s, during another period of prolonged peace, a television drama show called "Men of Annapolis" was produced and aired for one season in 1957. It lived on in syndication for several years after. The series portrayed Naval Academy Midshipmen in action-based "real life" situations. Academy leadership had full authority to edit or delete proposed scripts as they saw fit. Later interviews with Naval Academy graduates of that time showed a significant amount of them were influenced by the show to attend a service academy. In fact, of the over 300 graduates from 1962-1969 who responded to a survey by Sherman Alexander, over 95% stated that the show had influenced their decision to attend the U.S. Naval Academy. Ironically, the series was cancelled at the request of the Academy after the first season due to the Superintendent's feeling that the series had "exhausted...all dramatic material at the Naval Academy." The results of Mr. Alexander's informal study are interesting and highlight an underutilized information resource.

What about today? It would be interesting to examine how young people are influenced by such television programs as J.A.G., Pensacola Wings of Gold, and feature films such as the award winning and popularly acclaimed Saving Private Ryan. Our feeling is that such shows, all produced with the cooperation of the military, play a significant role in shaping public perception of the military, particularly in areas where there is no military presence. Despite this success, no real effort has been expended in linking television programs and feature films to recruiting goals, or even examining the

impact of such programming.⁴⁴ The historical reluctance of the services to participate in feature films and television programs makes matters worse. With the proper emphasis on military values and current missions, "soft" coverage such as this will help fill the void left by a lack of peacetime news coverage. RADM Barbara McGann, Director of Navy Recruiting, commented "There has been no significant DOD branding effort to speak of. Certainly CHINFO (Chief of Navy Information) and Recruiting Command could work closer on this issue."⁴⁵

While the military in general learns to deal with less media interest, one service is doing more. The Air Force recently invested nearly a million dollars to "establish a single, compelling theme...to represent [itself] to its members and public." The service hired the firm of Siegel and Gale to help them determine their new identity and message.

The consulants identified four prevailing themes to help describe the Air Force —

- (1) Vital worldwide mission
- (2) Individual achievement
- (3) Intelligence and technology
- (4) Core values⁴⁶

These theme proposals are a good start and could easily apply to any service.

General Michael E. Ryan, USAF Chief of Staff, commented. "We want to ensure our core identity is part of our culture and is understood...by the people we serve." 47

General Ryan's comment goes further than possible recruits as it includes their parents, teachers and coaches as well – the "influencers." Surveys have shown that significant hesitation exists in the parents of the current target population towards recommending military service for their sons and daughters. These reasons range from

dissatisfaction with the "hollow force" of the seventies to the scars of the Vietnam War.⁴⁸

To target this group, and in reaction to the Bozell/Eskew study, funding for the Joint

Recruitment Advertising Program (JRAP) was recently increased to 16 million dollars

from five million.⁴⁹ The goal of the JRAP is to appeal to "influencers" such as parents,

teachers and coaches. This program shows potential to increase awareness of the military

with this important group. While this is a good start, more effort is needed at the DOD

level to highlight current military contributions and missions.

Finally, it must be remembered that the two most impressive aspects of the military remain our people and our hardware. Dedicated and coordinated public affairs/recruiting events must take place to continue to introduce the target audience and their influencers to the people who serve. The Navy has embarked on a program of unprecedented domestic support of the recruiting effort from operational units. Major events include Navy ships steaming up the Mississippi River for the first time since the 1970s. Parts of the country such as the Northeastern U.S., an area with very little exposure to the military, will be well served by events such as the visit of the aircraft carrier John F. Kennedy taking place in July 2000. These visits, as well as other events such as Base Open Houses or Airshows need to be carefully coordinated for maximum recruiting effect. These visits often represent the *only* contact with the military that potential recruits will ever have making them now more important than ever.

Smart Recruiting Practices

Current Situation: While the high school graduate with some college education population outnumbers the primary market (high school seniors) five to one, the military

has not yet made a large effort to define or attract this segment.⁵⁰ New and innovative information and outsourcing techniques are called for in order to connect with this new target audience. It is safe to say that the old (and currently taught) methods of "cold calling" and manning the corner office are of limited use in attracting these prime recruits.

Recommendations:

Reaching a more educated and expanded market redefines the paradigm of recruiting and calls for radical changes in how we interact with the general public.

Improvements must be made in three primary areas, which are each discussed below:

- (1) It is time to pay as much attention to the <u>recruiter</u> as we do to the potential recruit. More emphasis is needed on recruiter screening, including specific aptitude tests to help predict who will succeed as a military recruiter. More incentive programs for recruiters are needed to help create and motivate the career recruiting force.
- (2) A viable and interactive internet presence is needed which will "think nationally and act locally". Military recruiting sites need to function as true gateways to military service. Recruiters need to be much more internet-savvy and need to be provided with customized sales tools which use the internet for presentations and information.
- (3) A program which would outsource recruiting at high college concentration areas should be evaluated. We envision using dedicated civilian professionals, working for the local recruiting district, to prospect college advanced education candidates.

Discussion:

(1) The Recruiter

All the services differ in the way they select their recruiters. Most people recruiting for the military did not request the assignment. A notable exception is the Air Force, which primarily employs volunteers for their recruiting effort since they have historically needed fewer recruiters. It is difficult to quantify what predicts a successful recruiter and little research has been conducted in this area. Navy recruiter screening, for example, has historically focused on whether the member is financially able to perform "independent duty". This leads to a wide variance in recruiter performance and motivation. As was explained at the Navy Recruiter Orientation Unit – "A person can be a top-notch sailor and be able to fix anything, but that does not necessarily translate to being a good recruiter. It's more of an innate ability." Proper recruiter selection is critical to success of the recruiting effort, but is not adequately addressed by any of the services.

Navy Personnel Research Studies and Technology (NPRST), in their vision document "Sailor 21", envision a better recruiter in the future:

To be selected for the coveted and highly rewarded job of the Navy Recruiter, [a sailor] passed rigorous personality screens and assessments of their recruiting strengths and weaknesses. Then, [they] attended personalized and highly interactive training courses oriented to their specific assignment and location and geared towards overcoming their weaknesses, identified during selection.⁵³

The Air Force has taken a different approach to the task of selecting recruiters.

Due to unacceptable loss rates and poor "job fits" among its recruiting force, the service now utilizes the BarOn Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQI) examination as part of a profiling process to select future recruiters. The goal of the EQI is to "define and quantitatively describe emotional intelligence." Figure 4 shows the factors measured by

the test. Of the traits listed, Stress Tolerance, Self Actualization, Problem Solving and Assertiveness have shown a correlation of .20 or better in determination of success as a recruiter.⁵⁴ The Navy has also adapted this test for use by its recruiter selection team.

FIGURE 4: BarOn EQI Examination Top Ten Correlates of Success
SELF RATING
TEST RATING

SELF RATING		TEST RATING		
Stress Tolerance	.20	Assertiveness	.17	
Self Actualization	.20	Stress Tolerance	.15	
Problem Solving	.20	Happiness	.15	
Assertiveness	.20	Flexibility	.15	
Optimism	.19	Social Relations	.14	
Happiness	.19	Problem Solving	.14	
Flexibility	.19	Self Actualization	.14	
Independence	.18	Emot. Self Aware	.14	
Quality of Life	.17	Independence	.14	
Emot. Self Aware	.17	Optimism	.13	

The idea of better recruiter selection makes a lot of sense to Steven Sellman,

Director of DOD Accessions, who stated "We have got to do better at selecting recruiters
to increase our efficiency in the field." This, and other programs, will not only help put
the right people into critical recruiting billets, but will increase the aggregate efficiency of
the force as a whole. At the very least, recruiter training can be better tailored to the
needs and aptitudes of potential recruiters.

(2) The Internet Wants You

The current web presence of the military is primitive and not highly user interactive. The Navy's website has been compared to an "online brochure." The service has admitted as much and is currently at work updating their web presence to better personalize and tailor its message. Lieutenant Commander Nick Dodge, while at the Navy Postgraduate School, took a hard look at the Navy's use of the internet and found it lacking. His idea of an "Online Recruiting Station" (ORS) involves a highly interactive military web presence which not only informs youth about the military, but performs rudimentary screening and links interested parties to chat rooms. Figure 5 shows a proposed home page for such a site. LCDR Dodge is now in charge of the Navy's "cyber-recruiting" effort at CNRC.

U.S. Navv Online Recruitme Station

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Figure 5: Proposed Navy web home page

The drive to overhaul the services web presence has much to do with how today's youth receive and process information. High School student Betsy Moore wrote in *USA Today*:

Because we have so much technology today, we have less face-to-face contact with other people than ever. Our social skills have suffered because of this. People...talk to computer screens and telephones and never have to deal with actual people. ⁵⁷

A recent study highlighted the decreasing socialization taking place in the interent age. Furthermore, in the 1997 Youth Attitude Survey (YATS), 39 percent of 10,163 youth surveyed said they believed or somewhat believed that recruiters mislead potential recruits or do not present a truthful picture of the military. It is a common complaint that youth feel "pushed" or "harassed" by interaction with military recruiters." Additionally, 43% believed or somewhat believed that recruiters mislead people or did not present a truthful picture of the military. LCDR Dodge noted, "Aside from the distrust that youth have of military recruiters, there is a lack of knowledge about the military that is keeping them away. Youth don't trust recruiters, but recruiters provide information to youths. It follows then that youths don't trust the information." All factors point to the conclusion that youth of today are more comfortable accessing information and making decisions in private as opposed to interacting with another person, particularly a recruiter. In looking at the potential market of high school graduates with some college education, it becomes even more important to present them with credible information "where they live" - and that is on the internet.

Some positive results have already been realized from the limited internet presence of the armed forces. Navy recruiting officials stated that over 2,000 new

qualified and interested applicants were generated in 1999 from banner ads leading recruits to the Navyjobs.com website. "Internet recruits" also tend to be very high quality. The Military Operations Research Society noted that "the services should aggressively exploit their early favorable experience with the internet in generating high quality leads with dramatically higher conversion rates than other advertising media. If a fully realized online recruiting station would not only feature information on qualifications, job descriptions, pay and benefits, but would also include advanced features such as basic testing and chat rooms to help both the service and the customer understand each other. Indeed, several civilian retail businesses, such as Home Depot, now recruit exclusively online.

Why so much focus on the internet? It has been postulated that the "Y Generation" (born after 1980) may be spending more time on the internet than watching television. ARADM McGann called the internet "the future of Navy recruiting." These realizations point to an increased emphasis from the services on what is now little more than a token attempt to utilize the internet. Even at CNRC, where the work takes place to utilize this medium, there are only eight people dedicated to the effort. In the words of Peter Senge, it is time to make the "big leap" to change the way we attract recruits. While the recruiter on the corner will always have a place, he or she needs to be empowered with the latest internet tools to compete with the civilian sector.

Current military recruiters are given little or no internet training. While the services teach their potential recruiters to operate standard contact-management software, the ability of a recruiter to use the internet medium is limited to whatever skills the recruiter happens to possess.⁶⁶ Our idea of future recruiting involves an interactive web

presence combined with recruiters who can utilize internet and email media to the maximum extent. Off the shelf software exists today that can be used to tailor specific recruiting packages based on internet applications. Recruiters can email these packages to potential recruits or interact with them using portable laptops or kiosks. Comparison programs can be incorporated which compare a military job to any civilian-sector job to present the entire picture. Instead of just listing the amount of bonus money available to the potential recruit, these programs explain the entire picture, including education and quality of life benefits.⁶⁷

Some recruiters are taking action. The Navy Recruiting District in Ohio has been experimenting with email as a replacement for phone prospecting and "snail mail" in reaching potential recruits. Using sophisticated mail merge programs coupled with local university email lists, they have experienced significant success, so much so that they are now filling quotas for other recruiting districts.⁶⁸ These improvements include significant cost savings when compared with phone and "snail mail."

(3) How Outsourcing Can Help

The premise of this paper is that "high education" prospects will make up a significant number of enlistees to the services, possibly outnumbering high school grads in the Navy and Air Force within the next decade. ⁶⁹ That being said, a system is needed which supports internet efforts and personalizes an approach to pursue drop outs/stop outs. Two methods currently used to recruit from two and four year colleges involve enlisted recruiters on campus and utilization of ROTC instructors in "dual roles" to recruit. While these programs at least acknowledge the market, they do little to address it

in a focused and tailored way. Most enlisted recruiters are uncomfortable venturing on to a two or four year campus, and ROTC instructors would likely feel that recruiting puts them at odds with their role as educators. The fact is that college youths turned down the "military pitch" once when they graduated from high school. A different approach is needed, and the answer could lie in outsourcing our recruiting effort for this market.

Our research has shown that hiring civilians to recruit military personnel is a contentious issue with strong opinions on both sides. Those against feel that "farming out" our toughest mission admits defeat and would do little to attract youth. Early results of outsourcing, however, do not show this to be the case. The Army Reserve recently utilized the contract firms of RCI and MPRI to recruit medical personnel and general enlisted for the Army Reserve. They have focused their efforts in the south and midwest with a total of around 85 contracted civilian (most former military) recruiters. Their results to date have been the same or better as military recruiters, while achieving market penetration in new and untapped areas. While it is doubtful that this could be replicated on a national level, it shows that this approach can be successful in well-defined markets.

Prospecting among youth considering termination of their undergraduate efforts is challenging. The market, although large, is diffuse, difficult to quantify and not highly propensed towards military service. A speech from Secretary of the Army Caldera to a large group of Harvard students at a recent forum event was interesting. He told the audience of about 200 students "it is not beneath you to enlist and serve in the Army of your country". His plea was met with complete silence from the students.⁷¹ Thus, a recruiter attempting to attract this market would use techniques and information much different from those trying to attract a high school prospect. Beth Asch, of the RAND

corporation, stated this college cohort must be shown a "clear path to a degree" to go with a guarantee of quality of life once in the military.⁷²

We recommend that outsourcing be attempted, on a test basis, for areas with high concentrations of college students such as the northeast. A person with a strong recruiting background would be hired to work for the local recruiting district. This "college prospector" would answer directly to the recruiting district commanding officer. Our feeling is that this highly focused recruiter would have the advantages of a non-threatening campus presence, better rapport with local officials, and a full set of tools for getting the message out to this highly educated sector.

JROTC: An Indirect Military Recruiting Connection

Current Situation: Connecting with the youth of America is critical to the long-term recruiting efforts of our armed forces. The ability of U.S. military personnel to make this needed connection with our nation's young people in local communities, however, has proven to be difficult. While the trust and confidence the American people have in our military is at a high level, they have not shown a general willingness to integrate the military into their local communities.

In many cases military recruiters are not welcome in our nation's public schools. Programs that can have a positive impact on military recruiting, such as Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC), are not welcome on many of our college campuses. Recent weakening of the Solomon Amendment, designed to withhold federal funding from colleges that do not allow Navy ROTC recruiters on campus, only adds to the problem. Reasons why U.S. military personnel have difficulty integrating into our communities and connecting with our youth vary, but the end result is that when our communities do not support military recruiting efforts, the youth within those communities do not have the opportunity to learn about the military, its missions, unique culture and potential benefits.

By the time military recruiters are able to connect with many of the young people in America today, their minds are made up in favor of opportunities other than the

military. The challenge of overcoming the lack of information or misinformation many of these young people have about our armed forces is too great to sway them into thinking about the benefits of enlisting.

Knowledge about the value of public service and an appreciation for our armed forces must be nurtured in our youth early in their lives in a way that is accepted, appreciated and welcomed by local communities. The Junior Officers' Training Corps (JROTC), a military sponsored youth development program, is focused on doing just that, and in a way that is more welcome in our schools than most military recruiting programs. While JROTC is not, by law, a recruiting program, its participants tend to show an increased propensity to enlist in some type of military service. ⁷⁴

Recommendations:

- (1) The Department of Defense needs to establish baseline information recognizing JROTC as a national program that enhances the image of our armed forces and communicates the values of military service to America's youth. This data needs to be disseminated to both civilian and military communities.
- (2) Meet the demands to expand JROTC programs to new communities as a means of nurturing positive civil-military relations through youth development. Congress must take the lead in making the future of JROTC a high funding priority.

Discussion:

(1) Recognition

This discussion supports a basic assumption of this paper: We believe that strengthening civil-military connections results in improving the U.S. military's ability to accomplish its recruiting mission. JROTC is highlighted as a model program for strengthening the connection between the military and civilian communities through

youth development. Positive program recognition is necessary if JROTC is to complete for adequate funding to promote future program growth. The following presentation of the history of JROTC, its objectives and accomplishments is given to provide baseline information recognizing JROTC as an established, valuable program.

History: JROTC was established as a U.S. Army program by Congress in 1916. It was implemented as a high school elective course and taught by retired military personnel. The program had a broad mandate to develop good citizenship and responsibility in young people. It was recognized by community and military leaders as one of the most successful programs in communicating the value of the military to youth in local communities during the first five decades of its existence. The ROTC Vitalization Act of 1964 brought about the formal requirement for each military service to establish and maintain JROTC programs.

Objectives: The overall objective of JROTC over the years has been to guide students toward success in high school and beyond by helping them to achieve specific tasks in specific time frames and to a specific level of excellence. The basic objectives for the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps JROTC programs include:

- Promoting Citizenship
- Developing Leadership
- Enhancing Communication Skills
- Strengthening Self-Esteem
- Promoting a Drug Free Environment
- Improving Physical Fitness
- Promoting High School Graduation
- Promoting Teamwork
- Promoting an Appreciation of the Military Services and Their Accomplishments⁷⁵
 These objectives support the FY 1993 Defense Authorization Act's formalized

mission statement for JROTC which reads: "It is a purpose of Junior Reserve Officers'

Training Corps to instill in students in United States secondary institutions the value of citizenship, service to the United States, personal responsibility, and a sense of accomplishment."

It is clear that the development and substance of this program are centered on one of the primary interests of every community in our nation, youth development. Research examples connecting positive youth development and JROTC participation follow.

JROTC and Positive Youth Development: The Army collects data on JROTC cadet performance each year. Their research comparing JROTC cadets with the overall school student population in a number of areas routinely measured by educators indicate positive results in favor of JROTC, as can be noted in Table 2.

Table 2: Key Performance Measures of High School Students⁷⁶

Key Performance Area	JROTC Cadets	Overall Student Population
Discipline Infractions	5.1%	13.9%
Attendance	84.2%	74%
Grade Point Average	2.68	2.57
Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT)	901.2	865
American College Test (ACT)	25.24	25
Graduation from High School	94%	89.4%

Table 2 results may be indicative of the impact JROTC has on student achievement or it may speak about the caliber of student choosing to be associated with JROTC. The actual cause-effect relationship of the research isn't clear. It is clear, however, that similar findings were noted in research conducted by the U.S. Naval Training Systems Center.⁷⁷ A review of studies by civilians on JROTC also indicated

positive results in the areas of student achievement, attendance, and behavior for students participating in JROTC programs.⁷⁸ A study of JROTC effectiveness in Chicago, Illinois, Washington D.C., and El Paso, Texas high schools by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) supported similar aspects of positive youth development associated with JROTC programs.⁷⁹

JROTC and Military Service: The Department of Defense (DoD) has an interest in knowing how many JROTC cadets will choose some form of military service following graduation from high school. Information from cadets is gathered using a self-reporting format during their senior year in high school. The data is collected and compiled in an annual report each year. The results from annual reports from 1995 through 1997 are displayed in Table 3.

Table 3: Disposition of JROTC Graduates of All Services⁸⁰

School Year	1995-96	1996-97
Total Graduates	23,349	30,630
Planning to Enlist in Active Service	24%	28%
Planning to Enlist in National Guard or Reserve	7%	4%
Interested in Commissioning Program in College	12%	8%
Other - Not interested in military service	57%	60%

Approximately 40 percent of the students participating in JROTC reported plans that involved some form of military service in the future. Given the significant number of cadets who report an intent to serve in the U.S. military, the benefits JROTC may offer to the success of military recruiting cannot be overlooked as a recruiting multiplier by recruiters at all levels. The youth development opportunities that JROTC cadets

experience have a positive impact on their propensity to enlist in some form of military service.

While a primary mission of JROTC is focused on the development of our nation's youth, building positive civil-military relations in local communities has been another outcome of this program. The following recommendation and discussion deals with JROTC's integration into local communities and the need for program expansion.

(2) Community Integration and Program Expansion

JROTC Program Acceptance: JROTC programs have integrated into school systems and communities in all 54 states and territories and in numerous overseas Department of Defense schools as well. They have developed a history of acceptance by local schools and communities. Studies of JROTC programs in Chicago, Illinois, Washington D.C., and El Paso, Texas high schools by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) provided data which indicated widespread approval of JROTC programs by school personnel in these cities.⁸¹ There are over 3000 programs currently in operation. The growing acceptance of JROTC in our nation's communities has resulted in an increased demand for more programs, as Table 4 indicates. Schools requesting JROTC programs include rural, urban and inner city schools spread across the United States.

Table 4: Schools on Waiting Lists for JROTC Units⁸²

Service	1992	<u>1996</u>	<u>1998</u>
Army	95	111	181
Navy	120	59	131
Air Force	28	77	118
Marine Corps	21	17	26
Total	264	264	456

Future JROTC Projections: The FY 1993 National Defense Authorization Act authorized an increase of the maximum allowable number of JROTC programs from 1,600 to 3,500. The services established a reduced goal of 2,900 programs due to other budget priorities. The projected increase of 1,419 units through SY 1996-97 resulted in actually fielding 1,103 units, a notable increase, but less than 80 percent of the planned number. Continued JROTC program growth is in the planning stages.⁸³ The U.S. Army and the U.S. Navy both recently announced plans to add new programs over the next few years but the timeline for new program additions does not keep pace with local community demands for JROTC programs.

New Program Challenges: Fluctuations in congressional funding and lack of service support for individual programs has hindered the growth of JROTC in all four services. The cost of funding JROTC programs in high schools across our nation was \$157 million in 1995 and \$163 million in 1996. This amount represents less than 4 percent of the more than \$4.5 billion the federal government spends for all federal programs supporting atrisk youth. While overall funding for JROTC programs has increased by approximately 5% over the past five years, cadet enrollments have increased by close to 20% during this same time period. The widening gap between JROTC funding

allocation and cadet enrollments presents a real challenge to maintaining quality programs capable of sustaining high standards.

Resources to support more programs are needed. The success of JROTC in developing youth and enhancing military recruiting efforts needs to be recognized by congressional leaders on a greater scale and funding to support additional JROTC program growth needs to have a higher priority in Congress.

Summary Comments

The 1992 recommendation of President Bush and General Colin Powell to double the number of JROTC programs as a means of giving critically needed development to our nation's youth was truly a step in the right direction. It is now time to reinforce another dramatic increase - an increase much greater than current JROTC program expansion goals indicate. By investing in our youth through JROTC we nurture an appreciation of the values that helped to make our country great. We also help them to make more informed choices about their future plans, choices which include a greater propensity to support and serve in our armed forces.

Conclusion

Overall, our examination of U.S. military recruiting gives us cause for both satisfaction and concern. Satisfaction stems from the fact that the U.S. military has earned the trust and respect of the American public over the past decade and that positive steps are underway to address the recruiting challenge. Concern arises from the growing shortfall of enlistments into the U.S. military during this same time period. The recommendations developed in this study propose to turn this recruiting gap around by focusing on an expanded market while strengthening the civil-military connection.

Most readers of this study may be surprised to learn that highly educated posthigh school graduates may soon outnumber the high school seniors currently recruited into the armed forces. In a booming world economy, it is important for the military to address this market before others do. Certainly aligning incentives for a more mature target market focus could pay significant dividends in terms of recruit quality and technical proficiency.

In the new millennium, all branches of the armed forces are focused on including information technology in virtually every area of warfighting. In a time when concepts such as "network centric warfare" and the "digital warrior" have altered the strategy paradigm, it is ironic that virtually no effort has been made to include information innovations in the military's toughest post cold-war mission - recruiting. Improvements in internet recruiting need to be pushed now with the appropriate level of effort.

In Table 5, we have attempted to quantify our recommendations with near and long-term horizons for each.

Table 5: Implementation Horizons

Timeline	Recommendation
Right Now	- Improve internet presence to create viable gateway to military
	service.
	- Improve recruiter selection and training.
One to Two Years	- Expand recruiting focus from current 17-21 year old emphasis.
	Include initiatives aimed at 21-25 year olds with some college
	experience.
	- Expand DOD loan repayment program.
	- Enact pilot program of outsourcing on college campuses.
Long Term	- Allow Montgomery GI Bill to include dependents.
	- Improve and focus DOD "branding" efforts to reflect new
	service missions and priorities
	- Strengthen civil-military connection by expanding a
	historically successful JROTC program.

Several reviewers of our work have suggested a further refinement of our recommendations to include monetary costs for each type of investment. We feel that putting a "price tag" on our ideas, however, would begin a new debate which would likely detract from our intended focus and become counter-productive. Last year, our nation spent almost three billion dollars on military recruiting, representing an increase of 30% per recruit over the last three years.⁸⁷ The ideas presented here offer a template to better allocate recruiting dollars by highlighting options for a new and expanded market focus combined with a more effective marketing strategy which is more independent of economic factors. Current recruiting asset allocation and focus, we feel, fail to address the

changing nature of the recruiting landscape and are too grounded in dated marketing methods.

The inescapable fact is that even the best strategies and weapons systems will be ineffective if they are not manned by trained and motivated personnel. As the demand for technically proficient recruits increases, military success in the future will depend on innovations in recruiting today. In a competitive market, the challenge is now larger than ever.

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